133 into the Barama at about 450-500 feet above sea-level and has a diminishing gradient of a little over two feet a mile to the top of the Great Falls which drop eighty to eighty-five feet in a distance of about half a mile (Bishop 1941:7). The plain is interrupted by the outcropping of the gneiss-granite bedrock to form the Frasier Falls. About thirty-five miles above Tovakaima, the Frasier series of rapids are about two miles long and present a very small total drop (Bishop 1941:4). The Upper Barama River is fed predominantly by tributaries on its right (south) bank. These tributaries follow the grain of the gneiss-granite bedrock and are mainly blackwater creeks which have a low potential for human exploitation. Such creeks are dark brown in color due to oxygen deprivation caused by decaying vegetable matter which also releases carbonic and humic acids (Meggers 1971:12).

• 13 182 241 Thus, there are three local micro-environments which yield biotic resources for human use. These are the river system, the naturally occurring rain forest, and the man-made fields of cultigens. From these, floral and faunal resources are exploited.

Floral Resources

824 241 Local vegetable foods are those that occur in the forest and those that are cultivated. However, there is no clear line dividing the two. The slash-and-burn horticulture by which vegetable foods are obtained is a modification of the rain forest. The cultigens are integrated into the forest in a way that they temporarily replace its floral community (Geertz 1963:15-28; Meggers 1971:19-21). From the